



A brief Relation or Remonstrance of the Injurious proceedings and Inhumane cruelties of the Turks, perpetrated on the Commander and company of the Ship Lewis of London; with the resolved Captivity of their Ship, Goods and Persons, by the Men of War of Tripoli and Tunis; with their happy escape from them. *For 8 1657*



William Ell, Commander of the Ship *Lewis* of London, with his said ship at *Alexandria* in *Egypt*, about the twelfth of *January* last past, was pressed by the *Bassa* of the said place, to serve for transportation of Rice, Sugars, with other provisions for the *Grand Signiers* account, from the said Port of *Alexandria*, to *Constantinople* or *Smyrna*, which of the two (might with most conveniency and security from the *Venetian Armata*) be first arrived to, with contract for the summe of *Rials* of $\frac{2}{3}$ 6550. for such goods

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as the Turks said they would lade; and for the rest of his ships burden, he was to lade himself or dispose of as he pleased.

The said Captain and ship thus forced and engaged, the Turks (contrary to the said contract) keep them from the 12 of *January* till the 18 of *April*, (with promise of consideration for demurrage or loss of time) they detaining him onely for their own convenience. At last dismiss him (with breach of contract too) both in quantity and quality of the goods promised to be laden) without payment of any part of his freight, or the least allowance for his so long attendance.

The Captain thereupon demanding compliance, with contract for freight and demurrage, is answered with threats of chains and captivity, if he forthwith depart not with two French ships, which they had in like manner forced to serve for Convoy of divers Turkish vessels which were ready to depart with us, putting on board of us (amongst other Turks) an Officer called *Capagee* to order us (as it should seem) according to Instructions given him, whereof we knew nothing, save to sail directly to *Constantinople* or *Smyrna*.

The said Turkish Officer or *Capagee* (so soon as we were gotten into the height of the Island of *Rhodes*) commanded us in the Grand Signiers name, to bear in for that Port (when we had a fair wind to sail on towards *Smyrna*) and the 28 of *April* we came into *Rhodes* with all our Fleet, save the bigger of the French ships, which left us two dayes before; nor could we hear what became of him.

In the Port of *Rhodes* we found the Captain *Bassa* (or General of the Grand Signiers Naval forces) with fourty four Gallies, seven *Tripoli*, six *Algerre*, four *Tunis* ships of War; here we are consigned into the *Bassa's* hands, and kept two moneths in worse condition (for blows of all sorts, with weapons and other wayes) then the very Gally-Slaves, and were reduced to want of all provisions, save bread onely, without money to help our selves; nor durst we go on shore to procure it. And besides all our personal sufferings (and making us row them with our boats where any of them pleased for the pay of blows and abuses) we were threatned by those of *Tripoli* and *Tunis*, that so soon as the Grand Signiers goods were out of our

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our ship, they would not onely have two youths of ours (which they had laid wait for, to satisfy their inhumane, unnaturall Lust) but also would be Master of our ship, goods and men, or they would set fire of us, though it were in Port; nor were those words onely loosely spoken as simply bravado's, but resolutions confirmed to us by some Jews passengers with us, who conversing with them on shore, advertised our Captain of the same; advising him to provide for the security of his ship, person, and goods.

Notwithstanding all which, and our ships being so leak (by reason of a stroke on a wrack as we came out of *Alexandria*) that our pumps went continually, we yet sailed after the *Bassa* and his Fleet to the Island of *Stangue*, where they then told us we must go to *Mettelina* (an Island 'twixt *Constantinople* and *Smyrna*) there to deliver all our goods, as well belonging to strangers as to our selves, and fit our ship to serve amongst them against the *Venetians*; to which answer was made that the Caprain was under obligation to several Merchants to carry their goods to *Smyrna*, that his ship (as they saw) was leak and unserviceable, wherefore he desired he might be dismissed to make all possible haste to *Smyrna*, lest the ship might founde under him, and all be lost. But no reason will serve, follow them we must, whither they please to lead us, till a fit conjuncture to make us a prey to the Barbarians, whom the *Bassa* is forced to humour, fearing their power, and wanting their aid in this so great exigent against the *Venetians*.

By this time the French Captain and the Mariners of each our ships had certain notice of the design which the *Tripoli* and *Tunis* men of war had on us both, and came to our Captain to give account of what they were too much assured, and wished him (as they intended to do) to provide for the preservation of himself, his people and goods.

In this great strait, not having much time to consider, nor others to consult then our own abused Officers and Mariners, (all struck with deep apprehension of our greater approaching miseries) after craving Gods assistance and direction, the Captain resolves all difficulties and expedients: And first,

1. That he had left a considerable part of his stock at *Alexandria*,
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dria, with all the freight (or pay) due to him for the present service to the value of Rials $\$$ 20000 or thereabouts, to provide lading for his ship against his return from *Smyrna* thither, and that he had in his ship the value of other Rials $\$$ 25000. or thereabouts (for his own and owners account) in goods no where vendable save in Turkey (or at best of little value in any part of Christendome) and therefore he not going into Turkey, would be the certain loss of all the *Alexandria* stock, with a very great part of that in the ship.

2. That if he should escape from the Fleet and go for *Smyrna* (whither 'twas probable his now mutinied Mariners were likest to be perswaded to go) That then for disobeying the Generals command of going to *Metelina*, (and under pretence of the Grand Signieurs dis-service) the General might make life and goods a prey to his fury and avarice.

3. That if he should go with them to *Metelina*, and unlade all there, our goods would be imbezelled and lost, we having none there to take care of any thing, nor any one of language to speak for us, if we should be kept amongst them to serve against the Venetians, and by accident should be taken by them, there could be no better expected then loss of ship, and captivity of persons; as it befell Captain *Mersie* in the ship *Peter*, about two years since.

4. That a French Captain which went away from *Alexandria* about four dayes before us, besides loss of all was taken and hanged by the Venetian General, onely for bringing provisions to the Turks, and hereof we had notice at *Rhodes*.

5. That against this desperate destructive resolution of the Barbarian Corsares to make prize of his, our persons and goods, we could have little hope of protection from the Captain *Bassa* or General, for that five dayes before we arrived at *Rhodes*, the said seven ships of *Tripoli* (which were then in the Grand Seignieurs service, and had received their pay before they came out of *Tripoli*, which notwithstanding) did near *Candia* seize on the ship *Resolution* of *London*, Captain *Thomas* on his way towards *Scandarone*, with the value of Rials of $\$$ 100000 in ready money and goods for the account of our Merchants, and made sale of our ship, persons and goods at
Rhodes.

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Rhodes, in the presence of the Grand Seignieur and Armata, which ought to have protected our ship, men and goods, and released all according to our Capitulations, had the *Tripoli* ships been simply in the capacity of Barbarian Rovers, and much more being in the Grand Seignieurs pay, and consequently of his own Navy.

The whole premisses considered, with the assurances (the French Captain and Officers affirmed they had from very good hands of the inevitable destruction which was designed for us; together with the general Resolution of our men not to run themselves further into an apparent misery which was yet avoidable; we on the 6 of *July*, near the Isle of *Samos*, took our opportunity to leave the Turks in the night; and by Gods blessing on the 28 of *July* we arrived at *Livorno*, for which great deliverance, the good & provident Lord be for ever blessed, our Captain and all with him humbly conceived, that God directed them to the most Christian and prudent expedient for the preservation of so many Christians, estates, liberties and lives, which otherwise must inevitably have perished, with their poor families depending on them, all whom may now by Gods providence live to serve their Countrey.

We are now informed that some officious persons here, clamour high, condemning this our act, as like to be prejudicial to the estate in Turkey; and that therefore they would endeavour to procure the great Dukes denial of us the usual priviledge of his free Port. And that we shall neither have reception nor protection, but would inforce us to return into the Barbarians hands, from which God hath so graciously delivered us; but had the perrest of those critical pretenders been under the same distress, they would questionless have considered with us that life being the most desirable of all temporal good (*For skin for skin and all that a man hath he will give for his life*) next liberty and estate, which makes our being a comfortable well-being; and then the reputation of justice and prudence, which are mans chiefeft ornaments and accomplishments, and all these at brink of inevitable ruine, and but one onely way left to escape it. It is believed they would have concluded with us that preservation of all was preposeable unto self-felony, self-braying

traying of liberty and estates (with the well-being of all our dearest relations) in fidelity to the trust reposed in us, by whom employed us, and forfeiture of the repute of prudent, or able to manage, imputation of all which must necessarily have been incurred, had we not used this onely means to save what else had been totally lost.

And for jealousie of prejudice to the estate in Turkey. The Tenth Article of our capitulation provides as followeth; *viz.* That no English-mans person or estate (except of such as have become sureties by publick Act) shall be liable to the debt or default of any other, and unquestionable the Lord Embassador with his power and authority will have better account of Capitulations from a Council of State, where things are calmly debated, that all parties may be understood, then poor men could have had when in the hands of merciless Barbarians, who had determined our general destruction; besides the two youths which were committed to our Captains Tuition (for education as well in Christianity, as in abilities to be serviceable to their Countrey; he was as willing to preserve from being forced (by cruelties) to turn Turk, or suffering other unspeakable abuses; As *Lot* was to incur inconveniencies to himself rather than to expose his two strangers (once retired under his roof and protection) to the abuse of those (and these are no less) *Nefarious Sodomites*, who at *Rhodes* violated two Greek youths belonging to the Gallies, for which some of the soldiers (who were the instruments of bearing them away) were hanged, but the youths could never be recovered out of the hands of the Barbarian Captain who had them; So little these Monsters value the Bassa's authority. But not to be troublesome with much more which might be said: The summe of all is self-preservation, natural and rational, and when that's at stake (with such a train of dependences as attended this case of ours) 'Tis humbly conceived, that all other circumstances (nay even legalities themselves) are not considerable; and if in order to self-preservation, a *Moses* obscured himself, a *David* feigned madness, & a *Paul* escaped out of a window in a basket; It may be hoped there's nothing in this act of ours contrary to Canon or civil right. And to take of all suppositions of making any

any advantage of the Turks goods, It is desired that the interested in the ship would become security to his Highness the Lord Protector, that just account shall be rendred of all that belongs to the Turks; and that the ballance due to them shall likewise be deposited in the hands of whomsoever his Highness may think fit to appoint to be disposed accordingly, after the case is more fully examined, controverted and judged; for we desire to give a good account of our selves in all particulars, to enjoy our Countrey and friends, and with our persons and substance to serve his Highness and the State, as our Captain and many of us in the same ship did, on the engagement with the Dutch before *Livorno*, under Captain *Badiley*, to the knowledge of all the *Levant* Company, in whose service our Captain hath been employed ever since his childhood; nor hath any other way of livelihood, save by the service of his friends in the *Levant* Navigation. And therefore humbly desires that this Case may have gracious audience, and himself and company acquitted or condemned according to the merit of it.

And in the mean time we further pray, that the interested in the ship would become petitioners to his Highness for his Letter to the great Duke of *Tuscany*, that we may with the usual freedom of his Port, buy, sell, and receive our dues without oppression or molestation from any pretenders whatsoever; That we may not be necessitated to any resolutions unworthy our Christian profession, or our Nation.

And lastly, it is humbly desired, That this our case may be represented to his Highness in the same dress it comes to you, for simple attire best becomes so sad a truth, which (with our selves) we with all humility, prostrate at his Highness feet, with prayers for his length of happy dayes.

This Remonstrance With a Petition to his Highness the Lord Protector, was delivered to Mr Secretary Thurloe, Wednesday last, being the second day of September. 1657.